

**ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD AGENDA BACKUP**

Regular Meeting of June 8, 2021

ITEM: ADOPTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL ECONOMICS COURSE

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TYPE OF ITEM: REVIEW AND DISCUSS

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to review and discuss the proposal to adopt instructional materials for Albany High School's economics course.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the Fall of 2020 the AHS Social Studies department began a process to replace the current United States History course textbook, Economics in Our Times, revised edition, which was written in 1999 and is extremely outdated. Because the was copyrighted in 1999, it does not cover current events and relevant themes for Economics today, including globalization of trade and supply chains, impact of automation and the technological revolution of the last two decades, and changes in monetary and fiscal policy since the Great Recession, making it difficult to address several California State standards, such as 12.6-”Students analyze issues of international trade and explain how the U.S. economy affects, and is affected by, economic forces beyond the United States’ borders.”

In mid October 2020, the Social Studies department began the process of evaluating new instructional materials. Texts considered included the following: Economics Alive! Pursuing American Ideals, Economics: Principles in Action, and Essentials of Economics.

DETAILS:

Process: A committee of US history teachers including Ms. Hudson, Mr. Knight, Ms. Schneider, and Mr. Hwang reviewed three possible textbooks for the course:

- A. Essentials of Economics published in 2021 by W.W. Norton & Company
- B. Economics Alive! The Power to Choose published in 2020 by Teacher’s Curriculum Institute.
- C. Economics: Principles in Action published in 2019 by Pearson

Based on our review we are recommending Economics: Principles in Action. The text we reviewed was the California edition. This text impressed our review committee as student-centered, has strong

digital resources, and has strong personal finance curricula. The digital resources include step-by-step guides and curricula that promote student-centered inquiry based learning, which can also be adapted and updated with digital resources chosen by the teacher. The digital resources can also be integrated into Google Classroom. The text does an excellent job of making topics such as small business engaging to students. It introduces different legal forms of small businesses--sole proprietorship, LLC--in simple terms, encouraging them to think for themselves which organization they would choose if they started their own business. This treatment--making topics directly relevant to students' lives--is present throughout the text, especially with personal finance topics.

Observations about the other texts: The content of Essentials of Economics is less student-centered, and is not accompanied by as strong of digital resources. The most appealing aspect of TCI's Economics Alive! The Power to Choose Ideals was its robust online support feature. The textbook itself suffered from a lack of visual components which we believed hampered accessibility and did not have a personal finance unit.

Essentials of Economics: This text covers more recent events and developments in the field of economics. The real world examples used in the text are reasonably current and potentially engaging, and it uses pictures and diagrams appropriately. Unlike the other texts, however, this book does not have online resources available for high school students or teachers. It is also less student-centered than our recommended text: for example, this text does not address personal finance.

Economics Alive! The Power to Choose: This text has a strong online support presence, including web-based lesson plans, powerpoints, and short videos. The placard-based lessons of previous editions have been replaced by an online repository of lessons. While the online lesson support was appealing and the text itself has more color charts, graphs, and photographs, the book is still very much text-based. The text offers clear explanations of economic concepts and comparative economic systems. Yet this text does not offer a strong student centered personal finance unit.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION: The approximate cost for purchasing 300 copies is \$xx. Funds will come from Restricted Lottery funds which are used exclusively to purchase instructional materials.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED:



Objective #1: *Assess and Increase Academic Success. Goal: We will provide a comprehensive educational experience with expanded opportunities for engagement, assessment, and academic growth so that all students will achieve their fullest potential.*

RECOMMENDATION: REVIEW AND DISCUSS INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL ECONOMICS COURSE